

What is claimed is:

1. A license managing system including a game apparatus to be licensed and a managing apparatus,

5 said managing apparatus comprising:

inputting means;

encrypting means for encrypting information inputted from said inputting means to produce encrypted information; and

outputting means for outputting said encrypted information,

10 wherein said encrypting means encrypts at least identification information of the game apparatus to be licensed and license condition information thereof to produce said encrypted information,

said game apparatus comprising:

inputting means for inputting said outputted encrypted information;

15 encryption decoding means for decoding said inputted encrypted information;

controlling means for controlling execution of a game program;

storing means for storing identification information of said game apparatus; and

20 storing means for storing internal information,

wherein said encryption decoding means decodes said encrypted identification information of the game apparatus and said encrypted license condition information, and said controlling means permits

execution of the game program when said decoded identification

25 information of the game apparatus and said stored identification information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship,

and said decoded license condition information and said stored internal information are in a predetermined relationship.

2. A game apparatus comprising:

5 inputting means for inputting encrypted information;  
encryption decoding means for decoding said inputted encrypted information;

controlling means for controlling execution of a game program;

storing means for storing identification information of the game

10 apparatus; and

calendar means,

wherein said encryption decoding means decodes encrypted  
identification information of the game apparatus and license period  
information of the game apparatus, and said controlling means permits  
15 execution of the game program when said decoded identification  
information of the game apparatus and said stored identification  
information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship,  
and said decoded license period information and date information  
supplied from said calendar means are in a predetermined relationship.

20

3. The game apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said controlling  
means prohibits execution of said game program when said decoded  
license period information and said date information supplied from said  
calendar means fall outside of said predetermined relationship after  
25 permitting execution of said game program.

4. The game apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising information outputting means, wherein said controlling means calculates, after permitting execution of said game program, a remaining period of a license period from a license period ending time indicated in said decoded  
5 license period information and said date information supplied from said calendar means, and outputs a predetermined warning to said information outputting means when said remaining period becomes less than a predetermined period.

10 5. A game apparatus comprising:  
inputting means for inputting encrypted information;  
encryption decoding means for decoding said inputted encrypted information;  
controlling means for controlling execution of a game program;  
15 first storing means for storing identification information of the game apparatus; and  
second storing means for storing a working state of the game apparatus,  
wherein said encryption decoding means decodes encrypted  
20 identification information of the game apparatus and operation limiting information of the game apparatus, and said controlling means permits execution of the game program when said decoded identification information of the game apparatus and said stored identification information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship,  
25 while said controlling means prohibits execution of said game program when said working state of the game apparatus falls outside of a range of

an operation limit specified by said decoded operation limiting information.

6. The game apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said operation limiting information represents an upper limit of sales of the game apparatus.

7. The game apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising information outputting means, wherein said controlling means deducts, after permitting execution of said game program, current sales of the game apparatus from said upper limit of sales, and outputs a predetermined warning to said information outputting means when an amount after deduction becomes smaller than a predetermined amount.

8. The game apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said operation limiting information represents an upper limit of the number of game playing times.

9. The game apparatus according to claim 8, further comprising information outputting means, wherein said controlling means calculates, after permitting execution of said game program, a remaining number of game playing times from said upper limit of the number of game playing times and a current number of game playing times, and outputs a predetermined warning to said information outputting means when said remaining number of game playing times becomes less than a predetermined number of game playing times.

10. A working state managing system including a game apparatus to be managed and a managing apparatus, said game apparatus comprising:

storing means for storing identification information of the game

5 apparatus;

storing means for storing working state information of the game apparatus;

encrypting means for encrypting said identification information and said working state information;

10 information outputting means; and

controlling means for causing said encrypting means, according to a predetermined operation, to encrypt said working state information and to output said encrypted working state information in a visible form from said information outputting means,

15 said managing apparatus comprising:

inputting means for inputting said encrypted identification information and said encrypted working state information;

encryption decoding means for decoding said encrypted identification information and said encrypted working state information;

20 outputting means; and

controlling means,

wherein when said encrypted identification information and said encrypted working state information are inputted from said inputting means, said controlling means causes said encryption decoding means to  
25 decode said information and, according to a request, to output the decoded identification information and the decoded working state

information in a visible form from said outputting means.

11. A game apparatus comprising:

working state storing means for storing working state information;

5     encrypting means for encrypting said stored working state  
information;

information outputting means; and

controlling means for causing said encrypting means, according to a  
predetermined operation, to encrypt said working state information and  
10   to output said encrypted working state information in a visible form from  
said information outputting means.

12. The game apparatus according to claim 11, further comprising

storing means for storing identification information of the game  
15   apparatus, wherein said encrypting means encrypts said working state  
information and said identification information, and said controlling  
means outputs said encrypted working state information and said  
encrypted identification information in a visible form from said  
information outputting means.

20

13. The game apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said working  
state information includes information relating to sales of said game  
apparatus or information relating to the number of game playing times.

25   14. A license managing method for a game apparatus,  
wherein a password representing encrypted identification

information of the game apparatus to be licensed and encrypted license condition information thereof is transmitted to a licensee, and said licensee inputs said password into the game apparatus to be licensed, and

5        wherein said game apparatus to be licensed executes processing for decoding the inputted password, first determination processing for determining whether or not said decoded identification information and prestored identification information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship, second determination processing for  
10       determining whether or not said decoded license condition information and internal information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship, and starts execution of a game program when determination results of said first and second determination processing are both affirmative.

15       15. A method for controlling a game apparatus, wherein said game apparatus executes processing for obtaining a password representing encrypted identification information of the game apparatus and encrypted license condition information thereof, processing for decoding  
20       said obtained password, first determination processing for determining whether or not said decoded identification information and identification information stored in said game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship, second determination processing for determining whether or not said decoded license condition information and internal  
25       information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined relationship, and permits execution of a game program when determination results of

said first and second determination processing are both affirmative.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein execution of said game program is prohibited when the determination result of said second  
5 determination processing becomes negative after execution of said program is permitted.

17. A method for grasping a working state of a game apparatus, said method comprising:

10 causing the game apparatus to output a password in a visible form, said password representing encrypted identification information of the game apparatus and encrypted working state information thereof;

notifying said password to a manager from a managing operator of said game apparatus;

15 inputting said notified password into a managing apparatus by said manager;

causing said managing apparatus to decode said password, and to output the decoded identification information of the game apparatus and the decoded working state information thereof in a visible form.

20 18. An information presenting method comprising processing for obtaining identification information of a game apparatus, processing for obtaining working state information of the game apparatus, processing for encrypting said identification information and said working state  
25 information, and processing for outputting said encrypted information in a visible form.



19. The information presenting method according to claim 18, wherein  
said working state information includes information relating to sales of  
said game apparatus or information relating to the number of game  
5 playing times.

20. A computer program for causing a computer to operate as a game  
apparatus, said computer program causing said computer to execute the  
steps of:

10 requesting an input of a password representing encrypted  
identification information of the game apparatus and encrypted license  
condition information thereof;

decoding said inputted password; and

15 permitting execution of a game program when said decoded  
identification information of the game apparatus and prestored  
identification information of the game apparatus are in a predetermined  
relationship and said decoded license condition information of the game  
apparatus and internal information of the game apparatus are in a  
predetermined relationship.

20 21. A computer-readable recording medium recording the computer  
program according to claim 20.

22. A computer program for causing a computer to operate as a game  
25 apparatus, said computer program causing said computer to execute the  
steps of:

obtaining an identification number of the game apparatus;  
obtaining working state information of the game apparatus;  
encrypting said obtained identification number and said obtained  
working state information; and  
outputting said encrypted information in a visible form.

23. A computer-readable recording medium recording the computer program according to claim 22.